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OCT 4 1956

WDTR

SUBJECT: Use of SM-65A Missiles in the WS 117L Flight Test Program

TO: Lockheed Aircraft Corporation
Missile Systems Division
Attn: Mr. J. H. Carter
P.O. Box 504
Sunnyvale, California

1. Reference is made to the paragraph at the bottom of page 7 in Pied Piper Progress Report for August, MSD 1958, dated 1 September 1956, in which it is stated that a study is being made of the performance of SM-65A to determine its capabilities as a booster for an orbiting Pioneer Vehicle, "on the assumption that the SM-65A may be available in quantities sufficient to provide a wealth of valuable test data early in the WS 117L program even if only a meager payload can be placed on orbit".

2. Because the Weapon System Project Office lacks assurance that the above assumption is correct and, in fact, there is reason to believe that the number of SM-65A's available to the WS 117L Program will be small, the Missile Systems Division is requested to limit the quantity of SM-65A's to be used in the flight test program to a very small number.

3. In the event a few SM-65A missiles are made available to the WS 117L Program, they will be considered as "bonus" test vehicles to be incorporated in the established flight test program. In all probability, their use should be limited to non-orbiting flights and, certainly, because of the lack of assurance of getting them, the Pioneer Vehicle's design must not be biased in order that orbiting flights can be made by using the SM-65A as a booster.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. C. TRUAX
Commander, USN

for FREDERIC C. E. ODER
Lt. Colonel, USAF
Assistant for WS 117L
Technical Operations

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WDTR 56-163

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